Exodus of Merchant Officers to Foreign Ships

5213. SHRI ANNA JOSHI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been continuous exodus of Merchant Officers to foreign ships resulting in large scale shortage of manpower for the national fleet;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of officers who left the national fleet during the last three years and expenditure incurred on their training; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to stop this exodus?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b). There has been substantial movement of officers from Indian to foreign flag ships mainly due to higher remuneration on foreign flag ships.

(c) As Officers on foreign flag ships are not recruited through the Government agencies but directly by the foreign ship companies, the figures of Indian Officers joining foreign ships are not available. The expenditure incurred by the Government is about Rs. 1.47 lakhs per Cadet of Training Ship Rajendra and Rs. 99,000/- per Cadet of directorate of Marine Engineering Training.

(d) The following measures are being taken in this regard:-

(i) Issue of new Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDC) has been restricted to officers who want to join Indian ships. CDC will be refused to those who initially desire to join foreign flag vessels.

(ii) To improve the remuneration received by officers and crew on the Indian Flag Ships, Government have extended certain concessions under sections (6) (i) (c) & 80 RRA of the Income-Tax Act in calculating their income-tax.

NRIs Deposits

5214. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total Non-resident Indians deposits held in foreign exchange as on March 31, 1991;

(b) whether there has been a fall in these deposits consequent upon withdrawal of the same by the depositors during recent months; and

(c) if so, the details thereof as on August, 16, 1991?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) The total foreign exchange deposits held by Non-resident Indians as on March 31, 1991 in Non-resident (External) accounts and Foreign Currency Non-Resident Accounts stood at Rs. 20727 Crores. These deposits are composed of (a) FCNR accounts which are denominated in US$, £ Sterling, DM or Japanese Yen and (b) NR(E) accounts which are denominated in Rupees but are convertible into hard currency.

(b) and (c). Yes. Till end July 1991, there has been a marginal decline in the FCNR balances in US$ (-84.4 Crores) DM (-24.8 Crores) and Japanese Yen (-2682.9 Crores) but there was an increase in Pound Sterling balances (+10.5 Crores).